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Project 1

My experiment will answer the question, “does the amount of time someone sits at dhall affect how many unplanned helpings of food they get?” This will be an observational study because while I will be observing individuals and measure different variables, I will not have the intention of interfering or trying to influence any answers like in an experimental study. For this study, I will ask 20 students who would be interested in receiving some volunteer hours for their organizations, to assist me with a study. I plan on using the block design method, with the goal of separating the students into both men and women so the different genders, and their separate eating habits, won’t skew the overall data. As the students enter, I will ask them what they plan to eat for their meal and an estimate of how long they plan to stay at the dining hall. After they have completed their meal, they will check back in with me and tell me how much they ate in reality and how long they stayed at the dining hall. This question is interesting to me because I found that during my freshman year, I would go to the dining hall for an indefinite amount of time, and just eat more food, simply because it was in front of me, not because I was necessarily hungry. I noticed a correlation between how long I sat and how much I ate, specifically food that I did not need. The conclusions from the data will show if students actually ate more food the longer they sat because as they exit, we will be able to see if there is a correlation between what they did not plan on consuming and how much extra time they stayed at the dining hall. I expect to find that the students who stayed longer than they originally thought, ate more unplanned food than the students who stayed at the dining hall as long as they predicted. While I am interested

in this project, and the idea of mindless eating, there are a lot of flaws in it. Students have different factors that affect how much they eat, one being stress. Also, some students have things that could affect what they eat, such as being on a diet, or have dietary needs, which would both influence how much mindless food they ate. It will nearly impossible to find a group of students that are a perfectly fair sample of all college students for this study, but to improve the accuracy of my data, I will plan to do multiple studies, with 20 people each time, during different times of the year. Another further study, could be observing how the most stressful times of a university affect how much students consume at the dining hall.